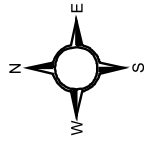


Figure 4-11

Planning Opportunity Areas



City of Falls Church

LEGEND



Planning Opportunity Areas



City Boundary

Note: Numbers correspond to numbers of the planning opportunity areas described in the text of Chapter 4.



2005 City of Falls Church Comprehensive Plan

File Name: Comprehensive Plan

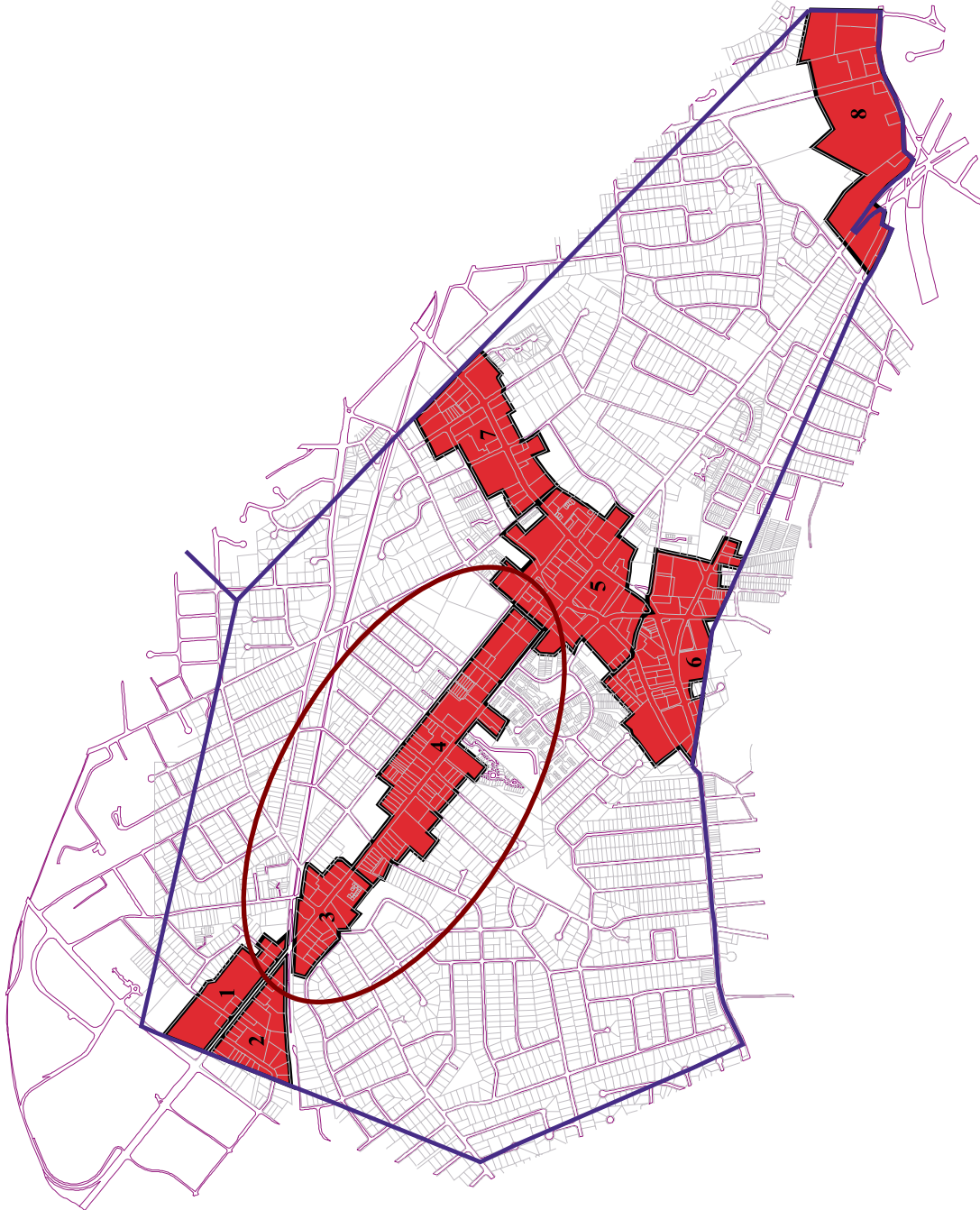
Maps 2005

File Location: h:/gis pc proj/

Date Created: March, 2006

Data Sources: City Base Data Layers

Disclaimer: The City of Falls Church is not responsible for loss, if any, resulting from the use of this map or the related data.



- Use uniform signage; and
- Achieve specific and consistent architectural goals (building materials, window types, roof overhangs, roof pitch, and porches).

AREA 2 – Gordon Road Triangle

The area, known as the Gordon Road Triangle, is located in the City's western end on the south side of West Broad Street at the intersection with the W&OD Trail. It currently contains a mix of industrial and commercial uses, including automobile sales and service, retail sales, light industrial services, office, vehicle storage uses, and the City's property yard. The current zoning in this area is M-1 (Light Industrial). The City of Falls Church purchased the Dale Lumber property in 1997 for use as a recycling center and property yard. If the property yard is relocated, it could make this city-owned property available for consolidation with adjacent properties and the eventual redevelopment of this area.

The "Business" land use category is used for this area to allow the greatest flexibility possible in its eventual redevelopment. The "Business" land use category allows a wide variety of uses included within the B-1, B-2, and B-3 Zoning Districts. These include, but are not limited to retail commercial, office, restaurant, and hospitality uses. Hospitality uses such as a hotel or conference center are especially recommended for this area. The special exception process may also be used to create mixed-use projects. In addition to the "Business" designation, the Mixed-



Use Redevelopment (MUR) 3 zoning overlay has been applied to this area to encourage an integrated mixture of commercial uses. This overlay designation applies to a number of the City's potential redevelopment sites.

A consolidation of properties is necessary to redevelop this area in an integrated fashion. The City should become actively involved in this situation to the extent that it has the ability to avoid further fragmentation or to consolidate proper-

ties. Redevelopment of this area may require a change in the existing zoning district from M-1 to one or a combination of the business zoning districts, which will allow maximum flexibility for the best use of these properties.

In the future it will be beneficial to the City to create a consistent retail facade along West Broad Street, especially in the area of the W&OD Trail where pedestrian and bicycle traffic is heavy. Retail uses in combination with the streetscape improvements in this area and along the W&OD Trail could encourage those traveling on the Trail or on Broad Street to stop and shop or eat in the City.

Another design-related challenge in this area is the lack of cohesion in terms of distinct parking areas, consolidated access, signage, and placement of structures. These issues, as well as those relating to retail appearance, are addressed within the Design Guidelines.

Design guidance relevant to this area includes:

- Locate buildings as close to West Broad Street as possible with parking in the rear of buildings;
- Create a retail appearance on West Broad Street with retail uses on the first floor of buildings;
- Consider the reconfiguration of Gordon Road and the alignment with Birch Street;
- Effectively use screening and buffering techniques for adjacent uses in the City and the neighboring areas of Fairfax County, as well as compatible transitions to the adjacent neighborhoods in terms of height, scale, and intensity;
- Provide convenient and safe pedestrian and bicycle access from West Broad Street to businesses and from businesses to West Falls Church Metro station and the W&OD Trail;
- Include green space along the southern border of the triangle with the Grove Branch to provide a better buffer for the stream and as an attraction and entrance area for cyclists along the W & OD Trail;
- Consolidate lots to achieve effective site planning and large-scale or mixed-use development;
- Consolidate entrances; and
- Achieve specific and consistent architectural goals (building materials, window types, roof overhangs, roof pitch, and porches).

AREA 3 – West Street/West Broad Street Area

The West Broad Street area is located on the south side of the intersection of the W&OD Trail and West Broad Street. It is approximately 18 acres in size. Current uses include a variety of small service establishments, restaurants, and two small retail strip centers. One of these centers, the West End Shopping Center, has currently undergone a partial renovation and includes a variety of new retail ten-

ants; however future redevelopment of this area is still possible under the "Mixed-Use" future land use designation. The Mixed-Use Redevelopment (MUR) overlay symbol has been removed from this area as the redevelopment of the Eckerd Drug Store site has reduced the land area to less than 2.5 acres, the minimum amount of land required by the MUR regulations.

Portions of the Saint James Church property are also included in this area. This section of the City represents the linkage between the West End and the Village Section of West Broad Street. It continues to be planned for "Mixed-Use," "Business," and "Institutional" uses and the majority of properties are zoned B-1 (limited business) and B-3 (general business).

Redevelopment potential exists in the 800 and 900 blocks of West Broad Street, which contain a series of small commercial uses located in what were once single-family detached houses. There is potential for larger scale



commercial redevelopment on these properties if parcel consolidation occurs and if issues related to lot depth and parking can be resolved.

This area is primarily designated with the "Business" land use category on the Future Land Use Plan Map with small sections of "Transitional" and "Private Institutional" designations. Future redevelopment in this section should be focused on a mixture of different types of commercial uses. Retail uses are recommended along the Broad Street frontage on first floors with office space located above or behind them.

Redevelopment of this section of Broad Street should focus on parcel consolidation and facade improvement to create a more uniform appearance of the retail and service commercial uses. Because this area represents a link between the Village section and the West End, a pedestrian orientation should be encouraged through the completion of the Streetscape Improvement Plan and through a retail orientation at ground level. All redevel-

opment in this area should adhere to the prescribed Design Guidelines. Small individual commercial uses on separate lots, a narrow band of commercially zoned properties, and heavy traffic congestion make redevelopment in this area difficult.

Development in the West Street/West Broad Street area should achieve the following goals. Most of these principles can also be found in the [City's Design Guidelines](#).

- Consolidate parcels to allow larger scale and mixed-use development;
- Consolidate entrances;
- Develop retail uses or retail appearance on the first floor of buildings on West Broad Street;
- Upgrade the appearance of existing businesses until the time that redevelopment would occur;
- Locate buildings close to West Broad Street with parking in the rear whenever possible;
- Improve the appearance of facades of existing buildings;
- Effectively landscape parking areas on the interiors and such that they are screened from streets;
- Create complementary signage; and
- Achieve specific and consistent architectural goals (building materials, window types, roof overhangs, roof pitch, and porches).

AREA 4 – The Village Section

The [Village Section](#) extends along West Broad Street from Little Falls Street to near Spring Street and has several vacant and underutilized properties. It contains a variety of commercial and residential uses housed in an assortment of building styles ranging from large office buildings, large residential condominium and retail buildings, to individual restaurants or to single-family houses converted to office or retail establishments.

Zoning in this area is concentrated in the T-1 (transitional) and B-1 (limited business) districts. The three residential condominium/retail/office projects approved since 2000 have started a pattern of large mixed-use development in this area. The first of these mixed-use projects, The Broadway condominium, office, and retail redevelopment project was completed in 2004. The Byron and Spectrum projects are expected to be completed in 2006. All three of these projects utilize above grade and underground structured parking. Future land use designation number 5 in **Figure 4-14** reflects a change in use on the Byron site from "Business" to "Mixed-Use". In addition the Mixed Use Redevelopment (MUR) overlay symbol has been removed from the 400 and 500 blocks of West Broad Street that are and will be occupied by the Broadway and Spectrum projects.

The "Mixed-Use" and "Business" land use categories are recommended for the Village section to achieve a mixture of residential, office, and other low intensity commercial uses.



Low traffic-generating office, residential, service uses, and lower volume retail uses are recommended for this area to revitalize it, but also to aid in breaking up the continuum of heavily trafficked uses in the Broad Street corridor. Development in this area should be consistent with the City's Design Guidelines.

The consolidation of small lots in certain locations in the Village section would facilitate the redevelopment of underutilized properties, particularly the single-family homes that are currently used as businesses on West Broad Street. These small buildings could be enlarged or replaced with medium-density structures or rows of attached, town-house-style, commercial development. There is also some capacity for infill development in this area.

A small area of vacant land exists on the north side of West Broad Street in the 700 block. New development in this area should be compatible with residential development on Park



Avenue and commercial uses fronting on Broad Street.

In the 1997 Comprehensive Plan, several lots designated as "Low Density Residential" between Spring and Lee Streets were amended to the "Transitional" future land

use category. This change was made in order to widen the very narrow swath of land on the south side of West Broad Street that was available for commercial use, and therefore very difficult to redevelop. In the 2005 Comprehensive Plan additional changes are being made to the Future Land Use Map in this area to allow for even slightly greater commercial redevelopment opportunities. Change number 7 in **Figure 4-14** represents this change in future land use designation from "Low Density Residential (4.0)" to "Transitional" on four lots between South Spring and South Lee Streets. In the future, minor adjustments to commercial land areas adjacent to commercial corridors may be made to accommodate changing commercial market conditions.

Future land use change number 6 in **Figure 4-14** is associated with a small area of land that lies directly across from the City Hall/Cherry Hill complex on Park Avenue. In



the 1997 Comprehensive Plan it was designated as "Transitional" on the Future Land Use Map, and yet the City would consider small scale retail uses appropriate for this location. For this reason the designation for the area has been modified to "Business".

Development in the Village section should also achieve the following land use and design goals:

- Consolidate parcels to create potential for larger scale and mixed-use development;
- Consolidate entrances;
- Create ground floor retail in multi-story buildings;
- Create a recognizable and functional commercial and residential neighborhood along this portion of West Broad Street;
- Achieve a better balance of mixed-uses to strip commercial-style uses;
- Create development that is pedestrian-oriented;

- Locate buildings close to West Broad Street and Park Avenue.;
- Screen parking areas, preferably in the rear or in structured facilities;
- Create signage that is complementary;
- Develop minimum and maximum building heights; and
- Achieve consistent architectural goals (building materials, window types, roof overhangs, roof pitch, and porches).

AREA 5 – City Center/Downtown

The City Center encompasses an eight block and approximately 22 acre area centered on Broad Street and Maple Avenue and extends west to Little Falls Street, east to North Washington Street, north to Park Avenue and south to South Gibson Street. [Link to Figure 4-14]. The "Mixed-Use" future land use designation has been applied to the entire City Center area with the exception of the pocket park at the intersection of West Annandale and South Washington Streets, to encourage an integrated mixture of commercial and residential uses.

The City Center area is a subset of the larger commercial/downtown district centered around the intersection of Washington and Broad Streets and is the area in which



much of the City's business and public activities are and historically have been concentrated. Facilities in this area include the Post Office, The Falls Church Episcopal, and numerous retail and office uses. The majority of this area is classified in the B-2 Central Business Zoning District. The entire City Center area has historically had a land use designation of "Business" on the Future Land Use Plan Map. Because a downtown business district is the pivotal focus for every city, a mixture of uses that reinforces the image of a traditional downtown is appropriate for this sector, along with the "Mixed-Use" future land use designation described in Change 3 within **Figure 4-14**.

The Post Office is located at the western edge of this area. It is a one-story brick structure that was constructed in 1953. This building and a number of one and two-story buildings in this vicinity, which were also constructed during the 1950s and 1960s, should be redeveloped in a consolidated manner whenever possible to create slightly larger and taller structures with the capability of adding structured, first floor, or underground parking facilities. The strip center adjacent to the Post Office and the Virginia Village site should be redeveloped and incorporated as complementary peripherals to the redevelopment of the City Center if possible. Any redevelopment of Virginia Village should address the replacement of the pre-existing affordable dwelling units at this site. In addition, although the distribution function of the Post Office may relocate out of the City Center, the retail function of the Post Office should be incorporated into the City Center as it is an important place-maker and pedestrian generator.

Over the past four decades many concepts for the center of the City have been discussed. For many years the redevelopment of a more urban downtown core was planned and during the past seven years this has evolved into planning for a more concentrated mixed-use "City Center".

In 1965 "A Plan for the Central Business District" laid the groundwork for the existing zoning, land use, and transportation circulation patterns in the area surrounded by Broad and Washington Streets. In 1971 "Proposed Development Plan- Crossroads Area" was developed by an Urban Design Assistance Team that made much more dramatic recommendations for changing traffic and land use patterns in this section of the City. The report recommended elevating a large plaza area and fairly dense development above Broad Street with cars traveling through at grade vias.

By 1988 the "Central Business Special Strategy Area Report, Phase I" described the redevelopment potential for many parcels in the Downtown/City Center area based on the zoning and Master Plan that existed at the time. The report also began to define possible changes in the urban form that would bring buildings closer to the street and closer together, and laid out possible zoning changes to accomplish these recommendations.

In 1999 the State Theatre completed its renovation, and it, along with other successful downtown restaurants, has brought increased nighttime pedestrian traffic and demand for other nighttime restaurants and other activities. Several office structures have also been built or renovated at the intersection of Broad and Washington Streets during the past few decades, including George Mason Square, Independence Square, and the Robertson Building. These brick structures range in height from three to six stories. Several very small-scale, one- and two-story